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Free concert
The Charlie Daniels Band takes the stage at Wiesbaden Army Airfield May 6. See page 6 for the details.



Adventures in booming Berlin
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Cyclists put their athletic prowess to the test at the U.S. Forces Mountain Bike Championship Series in Wiesbaden. See page 28.



Herald Union



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Serving the military communities of the 104th Area Support Group

April 27, 2004

Newsflash

CID offers \$5,000 reward for info about string of larcenies

The Criminal Investigation Division is offering a \$5,000 reward for information leading to the identification, arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for the larceny of about \$48,000 in property and funds from various Army and Air Force Exchange Service and Community Bank facilities in Germany. One of the suspects is described as (see composite police sketch) about 35-40 years old, slender to medium build with blondish/brown hair and blue eyes. She was seen in the company of two males and using a large white delivery van. The suspect is believed to have used false names — Marion C. Howard and Heike Woodbury. Report any information to the Wiesbaden CID at mil 337-6642 or the Military Police at mil 337-5096.



Suspect sketch courtesy of CID

Voting assistance officer training

A team from the office of the Federal Voting Assistance Program will conduct voting assistance officer training at Wiesbaden's Flyers Movie Theater at Wiesbaden Army Airfield May 25. All Department of the Army units and agencies are required to have trained voting assistance officers. Commanders must ensure their designated individuals attend the training which will be held at 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. that day. Voting assistance officers should call mil 337-6053/6337 to register for either the morning or afternoon session. Members of non-Department of the Army units and agencies are also welcome to register for either of the sessions.

127th MPs leave for Iraq

By David Ruderman
104th Area Support Group Public Affairs Office

Soldiers of the 127th Military Police Company deployed to Iraq April 21. Friends and family members of the company's Baumholder, Hanau and Darmstadt-based elements gathered at Fliegerhorst Fitness Center for late night farewells.

"You are going to war, and there's no easy way to put it, for a year, for a long time," said Lt. Col. John F. Garrity, 709th MP Battalion commander, addressing the Soldiers. "You are needed in Baghdad. You are ready. I expect you to take care of each other. Yes, there are bad people there, but we will find

them and we will take them out.

"You are Speed and Power and you are warriors, and warriors don't fail. You are going to make a difference," Garrity said.

He pledged the Army's support for families, urging them to read the battalion's emails and newsletters, and to stay connected to their Family Readiness Groups.

"We will do everything in our power in this battalion to take care of you. Wherever you are in the world, we will help you," he said.

The Soldiers broke formation, hoisted their gear, picked up a bag of treats and filed out of the gym to board buses. By midnight they were on their way.



Photo by David Ruderman

Sabrina and Staff Sgt. Charles Smith (center) and other 127th MP families make the most of their final minutes together before leaving April 21.

Extension: Soldiers, family members briefed on decision to extend 1st AD Soldiers deployment in Iraq

Brig. Gen. Mark P. Hertling, 1st Armored Division assistant division commander for support, conducted Town Hall Meetings in Hanau, Friedberg, Giessen, Wiesbaden, Dexheim and Baumholder April 16-20 to brief family members and Soldiers on the division's Iraq deployment extension. The extension, to last 90 days plus 30 days for redeployment, affects all three of 1st AD's Germany-based brigades, making experienced Soldiers available for missions through the transfer of governing authority in Iraq that is planned for June 30, he said.

Stop loss and stop movement orders are in Gearing up for summer safety

effect, and unit commanders will remain in place until the extension is complete. The only exception will be for Soldiers scheduled for one-year school slots, he said.

Compensation packages for extended Soldiers, which may take the form of pay or future assignment preferences, will be announced shortly, said Hertling. The Army is working out responses to the extension's impact on PCSing, dual military assignments, the beginning of next school year and other issues, he said.

Family members, some speaking emotionally, posed specific questions ranging from the

extension's impact on travel expense reimbursements and household goods shipments to the availability of family support services and the possibility of an Iraq deployment in 2005.

Hertling pledged to address issues as they arise, to keep families informed and to work with base operations agencies to provide the most support possible until the Soldiers return at the end of summer. (See inside this issue for stories about how Army Community Service, the chaplains, local schools and Family Readiness Groups are helping Soldiers and families deal with the extension decision.)

ASG launches motorcycle training program

By David Ruderman
104th Area Support Group Public Affairs Office

The 104th Area Support Group initiated Motorcycle Safety Foundation training with two days of experienced rider testing and certification on Hanau's Pioneer Kaserne April 13-14.

"Lots of riding a motorcycle is counterintuitive. It's a whole new thought process," said John Toner, chief instructor and rider coach trainer with the MSF and a contractor for Installation Management Agency-Europe's Safety Office. Toner is charged with training rider coaches to run MSF courses across U.S. Army Europe and was in Hanau to help with testing before moving on to train-the-trainer classes in



Photo by David Ruderman

John Toner (right) issues an MSF certification card to Sgt. 1st Class Nelson Cooper of Giessen's 527th Military Police Company.

Grafenwöhr.

"The Army has come out and adopted the MSF as the standard," said Steven Weissenberger, 104th ASG safety director. "The USAREUR Summer Safety Campaign requires all Soldiers who haven't taken the MSF course within the last six months to complete it. That covers all Soldiers in Europe, but several organizations have extended the requirement to their Department of the Army civilian employees. The 104th ASG will provide the MSF course to anyone required by their unit to complete it."

The addition of MSF certification to the licensing process was directed by Gen. B.B. Bell,

See Motorcycle on page 4

Commentary

Commander vows unflagging support

By Gen. B.B. Bell
U.S. Army Europe commander

The commander of U.S. Central Command has requested, and the Department of Defense has approved, that Soldiers of the 1st Armored Division Task Force remain in Iraq for up to an additional 90 days. Redeployment to Germany through Kuwait will add an additional amount of time, potentially up to 30 days.

The leadership has further stated that if increased force strength is required in Iraq beyond the 90-day period, re-



placement formations will be brought in to ensure the 1st AD departs Iraq within the 90-day time frame.

Old Ironsides Soldiers have spent the last year working to bring peace and democracy to the citizens of Iraq. Your troopers have achieved phenomenal success in this most noble mission, while proving to be exceptional Soldiers, warriors and patriots. Indeed the year has been filled with enormous sacrifices on their part, and certainly on yours. You are all our heroes.

The decision to extend the division was made by commanders in the field with full recognition of the additional sacrifices the additional service in Iraq will require.

Headquarters, U.S. Army Europe, will work to bring the

entire 1st AD home quickly as soon as the mission the unit is assigned has been completed. In the meantime I want you to know that all the leaders here in Europe, from rear detachment commanders through Headquarters, USAREUR, will work tirelessly on your behalf to ensure we meet your needs.

We will not let you down. We will continue to provide updated information to you as we support each other and our Soldiers during this challenging time.

All of us in USAREUR and the entire nation are deeply grateful for your continuing sacrifices. Thank you and God bless you and your incredible Soldiers.

Bell sends



Letters to the editor



Letter from downrange

Editor's note: This letter was received by a family member from a Hanau-based Soldier extended in Iraq.

Well here it goes, there is no sugarcoating this one.

I am sure some of you know that there are several Army units being extended for a few more months in Iraq. My unit happens to be one of them. Just as we were wrapping up and getting ready to spend time with our family and friends, we have to wait a few more months to celebrate.

It is something a lot of Soldiers don't like to hear — "We're not going home, we still have to carry on with the mission." I know that I don't sound like my chirpy, fun-loving self, but I have been working around the clock trying to get stuff ready for "redeployment" to Iraq.

What I can tell you is that we'll be here for about 120 days, so I'm looking at a July or August time frame to return to the real world.

Now more than ever all of us over here need your prayers and support. There are a lot of guys and gals who have been here over a year now. So if you can take some time out of your day to say a little shout out to JC up there in the big blue sky for our safe return, we would really be grateful.

I am sorry to break this news by email but I am limited on phone calls over here. Feel free to write via snail mail if you can.

Sgt. Marissa Saucedo
Headquarters and Headquarters
Company
2-501st Aviation Regiment
Kuwait

Thank you 25 years later

Editor's note: This exchange of letters began with a Soldier trying to locate his former drill instructor, who turned out to be Robert Lytle, the 104th Area Support Group's administrative officer.

To the editor,

I am trying to locate a Robert G. Lytle who was a drill sergeant at Fort Sill in early 1977. He was my senior drill instructor. I would like to chat with him. It's not a burning issue, but he made a very large impression on me and I basically would like to thank him.

Command Sgt. Major William J. Horton Jr.
South Carolina Army Reserve, National Guard
CSM Horton,

Yes, I am that drill sergeant. Hope everything is going fine for you. I am glad to see that you made it to the highest grade in the enlisted ranks. I retired from the Army as a sergeant major myself in 1988.

Keep in touch and I will write.

RGL

Dear Robert,

That's great. It's good to finally track you down. I'm sure that of all the trainees you had over the years, you probably don't remember many if any at all. I understand that.



Robert G. Lytle (right) and a fellow drill instructor pose for a photo.

I was in the class in B-3 3rd Platoon that graduated from OSUT [One Station Unit Training] in February 1977. You came in as our senior DI in the middle of the cycle because Sgt. 1st Class Cunningham had some medical problems related to his Vietnam service and had to be replaced. Anyway, I was one of your trainee section chiefs, and my good friend Steve Faulkenberry was also one. Steve died from cancer two years ago.

I would like to thank you for the positive influence you had on my life and on my career. You were someone who we all looked up to, and not just because of your status as a drill sergeant. You set a very fine example for all of us in that you were a model NCO, and everything you said and did had a purpose.

You were someone we could talk to. You made the training interesting and fun, and gained our respect and admiration by treating us like we were people instead of some subhuman life form. Everyone knew that you were tough, but we all knew that you were fair. I have personally tried to model myself after your example throughout my career and, as you can see, I have been pretty successful.

I know that this may seem a bit unusual to hear from me after 27 years, but this has been on my mind for the last 25.

I am very happy that I finally had a chance to thank you for your leadership and for helping to mold me into who I am today. It seems that so many times we fail to stop and give credit to the ones who helped us the most in our lives.

Again, thank you so much for a job very well done. I look forward to hearing from you again.

William J. Horton Jr.
Bundeswehr ranks

To the editor:

In our base support battalions many of us work with or come in regular contact with

soldiers from the Bundeswehr. To improve our knowledge of their rank structure would you please print a German army rank chart with the U.S. Army equivalent rank?

Thanks,

Paul Olney
Hanau Main Exchange

Editor's note: The following rank guide was gathered from the Army in Europe's Publications and Forms home page at <https://www.aeaim.hqusareur.army.mil/library/mis/translation/abr-us.htm>.

Enlisted

E1	-----	Pvt. 1	-----	Gefreiter
E2	-----	Pvt. 2	-----	Gefreiter
E3	-----	Pfc.	-----	Gefreiter
E4	-----	Specialist	-----	Obergefreiter
E4	-----	Corporal	-----	Hauptgefreiter

Noncommissioned officers

E5	-----	Sergeant	-----	Stabsoffizier
E6	-----	Staff Sergeant	---	Feldwebel
E7	-----	Sgt. 1st Class	---	Oberfeldwebel
E8	-----	1st Sgt.	-----	Kompaniefeldwebel
E8	-----	Master Sgt.	-----	Hauptfeldwebel
E9	-----	Sgt. Major	-----	Stabsfeldwebel
E9	-----	Command Sgt. Major	-----	Oberstabsfeldwebel

Officers

O1	-----	2nd Lt.	-----	Leutnant
O2	-----	1st Lt.	-----	Oberleutnant
O3	-----	Captain	-----	Hauptmann
O4	-----	Major	-----	Major
O5	-----	Lt. Colonel	-----	Oberstleutnant
O6	-----	Colonel	-----	Oberst

General officers

O7	-----	Brig. Gen.	-----	Brigadegeneral
O8	-----	Maj. Gen.	-----	Generalmajor
O9	-----	Lt. Gen.	-----	Generalleutnant
O10	---	General	-----	General

Herald Union

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News and features

Newsflash

Iraq casualties

Sgt. Michael W. Mitchell, age 25, of Porterville, Calif., and Friedberg's 2nd Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, died April 4 in Baghdad when his unit was attacked with rocket propelled grenades and small arms fire. **Spc. David M. McKeever**, age 25, from Buffalo, N.Y., and Giessen's 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, died April 5 in Baghdad when individuals using a rocket propelled grenade ambushed his unit. **Spc. Scott Q. Larson Jr.**, age 22, of Houston, Texas, and Friedberg's 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, died April 5 of injuries sustained when his convoy was ambushed in Baghdad. **Staff Sgt. George S. Rentschler**, age 31, of Louisville, Ky., and Baumholder's 1st Battalion, 35th Armor Regiment, died April 7 in Baghdad when his vehicle was hit with a rocket propelled grenade. **Staff Sgt. Don S. McMahan**, age 31, of Nashville, Tenn., and Baumholder's 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery, died April 9 in Baghdad when his convoy was attacked with rocket propelled grenades and small arms fire. **Sgt. Jonathan N. Hartman**, age 27, of Jacksonville, Fla., and Friedberg's 2nd Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, died April 17 in Dwanayah, Iraq, when his convoy was ambushed. **Sgt. 1st Class Bradley C. Fox**, age 34, of Orlando, Fla., and Friedberg's 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment, died April 20 in Landstuhl, Germany, of injuries sustained March 14 when his vehicle hit an improvised explosive device in Iraq.

Block leave, leisure travel information

SatoTravel officials announced if Soldiers present proof they were delayed from returning from a combat zone or are required to return due to the extension of 1st Armored Division units, American flag air carriers will provide relief by refunding 100 percent of payments for reservations without any cancellation penalty. When visiting the SatoTravel office where they obtained their air tickets, they must provide proof the block leave or R&R was canceled with a letter from their commander or a leave revocation statement. Soldiers or families who purchased leisure travel with a foreign tour vendor, cruise ship line or air carrier should also visit the SatoTravel office where they purchased the tickets. If cancellation insurance was purchased

they will be advised to contact the insurance company. If no insurance was purchased, Navigant/SatoTravel will assist in trying to obtain a refund on a case-by-case basis. Any refunds will be at the discretion of the vendor. (IMA-E Public Affairs)

V Corps Safety poster design contest

Design a cool safety poster and you could win a weekend in Garmisch. The V Corps Safety Office invites all ID card holders — Soldiers, civilians and family members — to enter their posters on the theme, "Victory Returns," focusing on Soldiers returning from duty in Iraq and the hazards they could face this summer at home. Six winners will receive prizes ranging from \$50 coupons to weekend packages for two at the Armed Forces Recreation Center Garmisch. The winning posters will also be mass produced and distributed throughout V Corps. Posters must be in digital format with a file size of less than five megabytes. Email entries to g1safsup1@hq.c5.army.mil by the contest deadline of May 24. Call mil 370-5661 for details. (V Corps Public Affairs)

Financial planning

Today's military members must be in a constant state of deployment readiness; therefore, they must also be financially deployable. During deployments many financial questions arise. Financial experts recommend doing the following to always be prepared: ✂ Open a checking account. ✂ Consider signing up for direct deposit or an allotment. ✂ Include spouse or relative on the account. ✂ Open a "deployment" checking account so that both family members are not writing checks on the same account. ✂ Consider having a checking and savings account with the same bank so funds can be transferred easily. ✂ Sign up for overdraft protection to avoid possible overdrafts or returned checks. ✂ Obtain an Automated Teller Machine card. ✂ Set credit card limits for you and your spouse. For more information regarding powers of attorney, standing payment orders, loan payments and insurance policies pick up a Financial Readiness Checklist at your Community Bank or visit your local Legal Office. (Courtesy of the Community Bank)



Photos by Marie J. DeLopez

Shaggy signs autographs, performs in Hanau

Reggae star Orville Richard Burrell, alias Shaggy, signs autographs for departing 127th MPs (see page 1) during a visit to their barracks on Fliegerhorst Kaserne April 21. Earlier (photo right) Shaggy, a Desert Storm Marine Corps veteran, performed for over 1,000 community members in a Fliegerhorst hangar.

Testing, training in Iraq

ASG team helps Soldiers attain driver's licenses

By David Ruderman
104th Area Support Group Public Affairs Office

The 104th Area Support Group dispatched a team of three to Balad and Baghdad in late March to bring U.S. Army Europe driver training to Soldiers deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"We gave blocks of instruction on driving in USAREUR, basically the same driver orientation instruction you get here, the same standards as we use here," said Staff Sgt. Raymond Myers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 104th ASG.

"We hit the ground on the evening of March 22 and started into it the morning of the 23rd," said Jeffery Morrison, a deployment specialist with the 222nd Base Support Battalion's Directorate of Logistics. "We were doing about three classes a day. We pretty much

started at 8 o'clock in the morning and kept going till about 10 or 11 o'clock at night."

Soldiers received classroom instruction on German driving regulations and road signs, took a 20-minute road sign test and the standard written test, which could last two to three hours. The mission was to prepare Soldiers to drive in Europe and take the mandatory test after redeploying to Germany.

Those who passed could bring their paperwork and their stateside driver's license to their local Motor Vehicles office, take the mandatory vision test, write a check for \$10 and pick up their temporary license, said Myers.

"A lot of units had the study guides because I guess they were under the impression that we were coming," said Myers. "Surprisingly enough a lot of Soldiers had been studying in between doing their missions. That's another reason we had such a successful pass rate."

"We actually tested 970 Soldiers, and out of that 722 were passes," said Morrison.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Raymond Myers

Tyrone Wilson (left) and Jeffery Morrison of the 222nd Base Support Battalion's Directorate of Logistics provide driver's training in Baghdad.

The team flew in to Balad, worked there a couple of days and moved on to Baghdad, said Morrison. "We were based there working with the G-4. The first three days we were on BIAP [Baghdad International Airport] and from the 26th we were constantly on the go till the end, April 5."

The third mission member was Tyrone Wilson of the 222nd BSB DoL.

"We were stationed on BIAP, that's where our tent was, but to give the classes we actually went out to the FOBs [Forward Operating Bases] all around, so we were driving around Baghdad many times. It was interesting," said Myers.

"Each parent unit would pick us up in a two-to-four vehicle convoy. We did everybody who was requested through 1st Armored Division," said Morrison. "It seemed to be a pretty smooth operation there in Baghdad. We never had any late operations. The only thing I would say is some of the Soldiers didn't come prepared. We would work with them in the evenings, one-on-one with Soldiers if they needed it."

"Another good thing, Morrison and Wilson were willing to go the extra mile," said Myers. "They worked around the Soldiers' schedules. Some nights we didn't get done till 11 o'clock or midnight. If there was one Soldier, we'd break out everything as if there were 100 Soldiers. They wanted to do it."

The dispatch of a second team to conduct training in Kuwait was put on hold as a consequence of the extension of 1st AD's deployment in Iraq, said Tommy Harrison of 104th ASG DoL Plans and Operations.

Preventing Lyme disease

Protect family from tick bites

By Tracy A. Bailey

Heidelberg Army Hospital Public Affairs Office

German health officials are predicting a harsh tick season for summer 2004. With a little prevention and a lot of common sense, you can protect yourself and your family against tick bites.

The common illness resulting from a tick bite is Lyme disease. *Borrelia burgdorferi* is the name of the bacterium that causes Lyme disease. A tick infected with this bacterium can transmit spirochetes during the feeding process to people, dogs, horses and other animals. Spirochetes are tiny gram-negative organisms that look like corkscrews. Lyme disease is rarely life threatening; however, it has the potential to cause serious problems in the joints, nervous system and heart.

In Europe the European sheep tick is a carrier of Lyme disease. Peak months for tick activity in Central Europe are April through October.

"The best way to prevent Lyme disease is to become familiar with tick habits and habitats and learn how to prevent tick bites," said Col. Loren Erickson, commander for the Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine. European sheep ticks' favorite habitat is dense, mature woods with thick undergrowth of shrubs and small trees. They are also found along the edge of woods and where woods meet lawns or fields. Ticks prefer the cool, moist woodlands.

High risk areas and activities

☛ Yards surrounded by dense woods; ☛ Birdbaths, birdfeeders; ☛ Outdoor pets that come indoors; ☛ Wood-piles, brush piles, stone or rock fences; ☛ Swing sets, tree houses in the woods; ☛ Outdoor occupations: landscapers, utility line workers, farmers, etc.; ☛ Outdoor recreation: fresh water fishing, camping, hiking, hunting, etc.

Personal protection is first step

People at the greatest risk are those who engage in hiking, camping or similar outdoor activities in rural wooded areas. Outdoor pursuits do not need to be discontinued as long as

precautions are taken to prevent a tick bite:

☛ Wear light-colored clothing (ticks are easier to see); ☛ Wear long pants tucked into socks; ☛ Avoid tall grass and shrubby areas; ☛ Widen trails through woods (to six feet); ☛ Remove brush piles; ☛ Keep turf grass mowed; ☛ Thin out low shrub vegetation in woods; ☛ Wear a tick repellent.

Removing ticks

Removing ticks quickly can help prevent transmission of the disease. Do not use a lighted match or cigarette to force the tick to back out. Covering the tick with nail polish or Vaseline is not effective in removing it. In order to safely remove the tick, grasp the tick firmly with tweezers as close to the skin as possible and pull straight out (no twisting). Do not jerk, twist or rip the tick from your skin. After removing the tick, clean the area with disinfectant (alcohol, peroxide). Be sure to have the tick bite examined by a doctor if a rash develops or possible infection occurs.

Symptoms of Lyme disease

It is important to be aware of the signs and symptoms of Lyme disease even if you don't think you've been bitten. Symptoms vary from person to person. Usually a small, red skin rash develops at the site of the tick bite three to 32 days after the tick bite. Gradually this area enlarges and there is often a partial clearing at the center, which looks like a doughnut. The rash may be accompanied by flu-like symptoms such as fever, headache, stiff neck, sore and aching muscles and joints, fatigue, sore throat and swollen glands. The symptoms and rash may disappear in several weeks; however, the rash and more serious problems may occur later. Treatment with antibiotics clears up the rash and usually prevents complications. If not treated, Lyme disease can cause long-term health problems with the joints, nervous system and heart.

"After any tick bite, stay alert for the signs and symptoms of Lyme disease. If a tick bite is followed by a skin rash and or flu like symptoms, promptly see a physician for evaluation and treatment," said Erickson.

Motorcycle

Continued from page 1

USAREUR commander, in the aftermath of motorcycle fatalities among Soldiers last year.

Most motorcycle riders lack basic skills, said Toner. "Frankly, they need to learn how to ride their motorcycles. They don't know how to turn, they don't know how to brake and they don't know how to swerve, and these are the three lifesaving skills that people need to know ... and these were very experienced riders."

"It'll save lives," said Weissenberger. "People know how to start their bikes and turn them around a little, but do they really know how to react when something unplanned happens? That's what they learn in this course."

"It's definitely good, basic stuff that we customarily don't think of," Sgt. 1st Class Nelson Cooper of Giessen's 527th Military Police Company, after completing the certifi-

cation April 13. "For me the rear brakes are what I used for the most part, not knowing that the front brakes are dominant."

Cooper was one of nine Soldiers to pass the certification.

"Just in the 104th ASG we have 1,212 licensed motorcycle operators," said Weissenberger. "Some of those don't have bikes over here and some have already rotated. We might have about 800 registered motorcycles. Our goal is to take that database and email every one of them about the MSF requirement. And we plan to provide the same information to their units."

To be in compliance all bike riders must possess a valid stateside motorcycle license and complete the MSF course. New riders take a two-day course; experienced riders take a one-day course. Training and testing will be offered on Hanau's Pioneer Kaserne and, for the convenience of riders in the Baumholder community, on an Air Force training course in Vogelweh. The certification course is free of charge to participants.

"It costs them nothing to take it," said Weissenberger. "In the States it would cost you about \$100, and most folks find their insurance company reduces their rates once they've taken the course. Right now the plan is we're going to hold a course at both locations on every USAREUR training holiday."

Tentatively scheduled dates are April 27 in Hanau, April 28 in Vogelweh and May 21 in Hanau. After that training will be held in both locations on May 28, June 21, July 2 and Aug. 9. For information and to register for MSF certification contact your local Driver Testing Station, BSB Safety Office or the 104th ASG Safety Office via email at 104safety@104asg.army.mil.



Instructors give a motorcyclist tips on safer riding during training in Hanau April 13-14.

Newsflash

Apply now for CAC, AKO

All eligible personnel must apply for Army Knowledge Online email accounts and Common Access Cards now if they have not already done so. They should visit their local ID card section to do so and must remember their Personnel Identification Number in order to use their CAC reader when it is installed on their computer. (104th ASG Automation)

Global population

The world's population increased by 1.2 percent in 2002 to total more than 6.2 billion, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The increase of 74 million in 2002 is substantially below the annual high of 87 million people added in 1989-90. The rate is well below the high of about 2.2 percent a year experienced 40 years ago. The slowdown in global population growth is linked primarily to declines in fertility. The world's older population is expected to grow considerably in coming decades. In 2050, there will be more than three times as many people age 65 and older as there are today, according to the bureau. (U.S. Census Bureau Release)



Medical Ball

The 2004 European Army Medical Department Regimental Ball will be held May 27 at 6 p.m. at the Village Pavilion in Heidelberg's Patrick Henry Village. All friends of the Army Medical Department are invited. Cost is \$25 for military officers, civilians GS-9s/C-6s/enlisted Soldiers E-7 and above; \$20 for civilians GS-8/C-5a/enlisted Soldiers E-6 and below. Call 1st Lt. La'Shonia White or Master Sgt. Skelton at mil 371-2978, civ (06221) 17-3250. (Europe Army Regional Medical Command Public Affairs)

Give to Army Emergency Relief

This year's Army Emergency Relief fund-raising campaign runs through May 15. "Last year AER provided more than \$34 million of direct assistance to some 50,000 Soldiers and their families," said Russell B. Hall, Installation Management Agency-Europe Region director. "This assistance was provided through interest-free loans, grants and scholarships, all of which were made possible through generous individual contributions." Soldiers wishing to contribute may do so through a monthly allotment from their pay or through a cash or check donation. For more information visit the www.aerhq.org website or stop by your local AER office. (IMA-E Public Affairs)

Free tickets for families

Hundreds of free tickets for sporting events, swimming pools, museums and other local activities donated by the Hessen State Chancellory for redeploying Operation Iraqi Freedom Soldiers and their families have been distributed to locations in the 221st, 284th and 414th Base Support Battalions. Pick-up locations are the Wiesbaden USO at the Welcome Center on Wiesbaden Army Airfield (Building 1023 West, call mil 337-5806), Friedberg Army Community Service on Ray Barracks (Building 3608, call mil 324-3465), Giessen Army Community Service on the Giessen Depot (Building 3, Room 106, call mil 343-7618) and Hanau Army Community Service on Pioneer Kaserne (Building 9, mil 322-9524).

AWAG Conference May 2-6

Register now to attend this year's American Women's Activities, Germany, Conference to be held May 2-6 at the Allgäu Stern Hotel in Sonthofen. The conference will focus on leadership development, host nation-American relationships, club procedures, personal and professional growth, increased organizational skills and community awareness. For more information call Catherine Locke at civ (06374) 802 989 or send an email to hessen@awag.us.

Local medical unit named best in Army

By Cassandra Kardeke
221st Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office

A Wiesbaden unit has been named the best ground and air evacuation unit in the U.S. Army.

In a ceremony at Wiesbaden Army Airfield April 16, the 421st Medical Evacuation Battalion added the Lt. Gen. Ellis D. Parker to its list of accomplishments for fiscal year 2003.

This wasn't the first time the battalion was so honored; the 421st has earned the award seven times, including consecutively from 1997-2000.

"It's good to see that this award is back in Wiesbaden. There's no doubt in my mind that the 421st is the best medical evacuation battalion in the Army," said Lt. Col. Donald Gagliano, 30th Medical Brigade commander, during the ceremony.

Throughout fiscal year 2003 the 421st, known as "Dustoff Europe," deployed every company in its organization in support of the Global War on Terrorism. Split among operations, the battalion deployed to Turkey and Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom; to Kuwait and Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom; and to Hungary in support of Free Iraqi Forces.

Over the course of these deployments more than 4,000 injured Soldiers, sailors, Marines and civilians received care from the 421st. Their aircrews flew over 8,600 hours with no class A, B or C accidents.

"Every mission we were asked to do we exceeded in every endeavor," said Lt. Col. Patrick Sargent, 421st commander.

While the units were deployed, the battalion rear detachment

helped set up a Yellow Ribbon Room for the family members left behind. Complete with a television and children's area, computers were set up for family members to enable them to keep in touch with their loved ones through email.

"I say this from the bottom of my heart. It is an honor to stand here and serve with the most tactically and efficient Soldiers in the U.S. Army," said Sargent to a formation of Soldiers from the battalion's companies.

Lt. Gen. Ellis D. Parker was the first commander of the Army Aviation branch and served as the aviation branch chief and school commandant for five and one-half years. When he retired in 1992, then Army Chief of Staff Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan directed the creation of the award to honor the top aviation battalions in the Army.



Photo by Cassandra Kardeke

Lt. Col. Patrick Sargent (left), 421st Medical Evacuation Battalion commander, and Lt. Col. Donald Gagliano, 30th Medical Brigade commander, unveil a placard naming the 421st as the top medevac battalion in the U.S. Army.

Each year aviation and medical evacuation battalions compete for the honor and are judged based on

their achievements in the areas of leadership, safety, training and maintenance.

Festival focuses on local talent

With spring now here, the Römer Art Center is preparing for its third annual Spring Arts Festival.

Held May 2-31, the festival exhibits 250-400 pieces of individually created works by the center's students, instructors, local amateurs, professional artists and children throughout the community at temporary galleries. Works include paintings, drawings, sculptures, pottery, fabric arts, mixed media and photography.

The festival will also showcase local musical talent at matinee performances each Sunday throughout the community. For information

on where the performances will be held contact the center at mil 337-5722 or civ (0611) 705-5722.

By special arrangement with Morale, Welfare and Recreation entertainment director Charlie Fontana, the first matinee will be a performance of "The Wizard of Oz," May 2 at the Art Center. A musical recital will also be held May 30 to close the event.

In conjunction with the Arts Festival Römer Art Center personnel have placed 20 portraits of Vincent Van Gogh throughout the Wiesbaden community. Stop by the Art Center to pick up a score card

and try to find all 20 portraits. Once you have found all 20, take the completed score card to Römer Art Center. Of the correct score cards, one lucky winner will be randomly chosen to receive a \$100 gift certificate for Römer classes and services.

Artists do not have to be customers of the center to participate in the festival or exhibit their work. Artwork will still be accepted for exhibition through April 28. For more information or to exhibit your own artwork call mil 337-5722 or civ (0611) 705-5722.



Photo by Cassandra Kardeke

Emily Roguski, Römer Art Center director, paints a portrait of a child at play during last year's Ford Summer Jam. The center hosts its third annual Spring Arts Festival focusing on local artists May 2-31.